5: Bourne T-5 (1849) 1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5



The climate is severe. The Rio Negro forms the northern boundary, and nearly the whole country is south of the parallel of 40° south latitude. At the time of my capture, which was in the month of May, the weather corresponded to that of November in the New England States. Its chilliness, however, was greatly increased by the bleak winds of that exposed locality. Along the Straits of Magellan the weather is also exceedingly changeable. Sudden and severe squalls, often amounting almost to a hurricane, vex the navigation of the straits, and sweep over the coast with fearful fury.

The habits of the Patagonians, or at least of the tribe among whom I was cast, are migratory, wandering over the country in quest of game, or as their caprice may prompt them. They subsist altogether on the flesh of animals and birds. The guanaco furnishes most of their food, and all their clothing. A mantle of skins, sewed with the sinews of the ostrich, fitting closely about the neck and extending below the knee, is their only article of dress, except in the coldest weather, when a kind of shoe, made of the hind hoof and a portion of the skin above it, serves to protect their inferior extremities.

In person they are large; on first sight, they appear absolutely gigantic. They are taller than any other race I have seen, though it is impossible to give any accurate description. The only standard of measurement I had was my own height, which is about five feet ten inches. I could stand very easily under the arms of many of them, and all the men were at least a head taller than myself. Their average height, I should think, is nearly six and a half feet, and there were specimens that could have been